Eyes and Teeth

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Eyes and Teeth

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Summary

"You want me inside all of your senses at once."

Notes

Well... hello everyone. It's been a while, hasn't it?

Yep, I haven't updated this series in five entire years. I haven't written any Hannibal fic, actually. I started this series my first year of college, and now I'm a year into my chosen career path with my own apartment. Life has been... crazy.

I finally did a full Hannibal rewatch again, and just felt so inspired. Wanted the old scent, the old feeling back again. Feels good to stretch these muscles again. My writing has evolved, I think, but I'm happy to be on familiar ground again. Please enjoy.

See the end of the work for more notes

He's looking at him.

The notes in this particular Merlot include undercurrents of vanilla and plum, but it tasted bitter on Hannibal's tongue. His lip curled unconsciously, barely perceptible to the crowd around him, but he looked through the crowd of people to Will standing in a back corner, his own wineglass to his lips, engaged in a one-way conversation with a visiting seminary student. He still wore the collar around his neck, a walking conversation piece, an excuse to bring up his study. Will would occasionally nod, take another sip of wine, cock his head in a way that radiated passing interest.

And he was looking at him.

Hannibal picked up two black olives from the cheese plate, put them in his mouth, and bit down firmly, crushing the silky, briny texture between his molars.

Will had given his conversation partner a smile by this point. It was a convincing smile, but only on the surface. When Will does smile, when he smiles at their dog or the sunset or when Hannibal takes his hand over the table, it's never with all of his teeth.

Hannibal bit down on a third olive. This one was not pitted like the others. This simple misstep made his lip curl again.

But this time when he looked up from his glass, Will's eyes were gazing back from across the room.

Hannibal delicately spit the pit into a cocktail napkin, and puts his wineglass on a platter before walking through the crowd, offering smiles for the other guests, but every time he looks forward, Will is still looking in his direction, drawing him closer with a simple gaze.

Hannibal was interrupted by one of the other professors at the local college, and in the two minutes of chatter to keep up appearances, he looked back to find Will drawn back into the conversation with the same seminary student.

He's looking at him again. He's looking at Will again, and Will is looking ***back*** *at him.*

Will finished his glass of wine before he held it out expectantly, feeling Hannibal's presence beside him. His guessing skills paid off, as Hannibal took the glass from him and set it aside to be put away by a waiter before his hand rested on his shoulder.

"Tom, this is my husband." There's a slight spark in Will's eyes every time he says that word. Hannibal has never been able to do the image justice with his pencils or pens or charcoal.

"Pleasure to meet you," Hannibal smiles, his teeth escaping his own smile. "I understand you're in seminary."

"Yes." Tom positively preens about his little study, his blonde hair tucked behind his ear. "I was just discussing my research in Song of Songs. I find it one of the more challenging books to examine."

Hannibal should press more, tease out more of this conversation, save a few remarks, but Will's hand covered Hannibal's on his shoulder. Will's smile came back into his jaw, Hannibal could almost taste the tension in it. "Well, I think we'll have to finish this conversation later, Tom. We have morning plans, and I need to let the dog out."

Hannibal's fingers dug into Will's shoulder as Will and Tom exchanged goodbyes and Will offered to let him know when they could speak again. If only that collar were tighter around his throat…

"I think he thinks I'm a heathen. Can't imagine what he'd think of you," Will remarks in the car, warm rain drizzling onto the windshield. Hannibal sends him a glare out of the corner of his eye, receiving a laugh from Will as he flips through the radio stations. He leaves it on a religious station, only for Hannibal to change it.

"Attempting conversions at a cocktail party? Rather bold of him.

Will shrugged as he let his hand cover Hannibal's on the gearshift, his head falling back against the headrest. "Throes of new passion, but the religious kind. Everyone else should feel the same thing he's feeling, regardless if they hold the same beliefs or not."

"You don't seem very moved by his words."

One of Will's nails lightly scratched the top of Hannibal's knuckles. "I'm not in the market for a new religion."

Will loosened his tie as he walked over to the minibar and picked up the whiskey decanter (a double fifth anniversary gift: the whiskey for him, the decanter for Hannibal) and poured both of them a few fingers in the crystal glasses. He could smell Hannibal fixing a snack in the kitchen, so he brought the drinks to the living room, setting them on the coasters on the coffee table. He stroked their dog's head, scratched behind her ears, clicked his tongue to lead her to her dog bed in the corner. As he sat back on the couch, he tugged off his tie the rest of the way, letting it fall to the floor.

"That tie is Italian silk, you know."

"So it's different from all my others, how?" Will retorted as he accepted the glass bowl of homemade popcorn Hannibal handed him. Hannibal merely shook his head as he sat beside Will and picked up his drink. Will cracked a smile at that, balancing the bowl on his knee as he reached up with his free hand, undoing the knot on Hannibal's tie with remarkable ease. "Much better."

Hannibal caught his hand before he could toss the tie on the floor, a smile threatening to break out of him. "You are a menace."

“If I was anything else, you’d be bored.” Will let that statement hang in the air as popped a piece of popcorn into his mouth, watching Hannibal’s lips curl in that simple smile as he sipped his drink. The response didn’t come as quickly as Will anticipated, so he prompted Hannibal to speak, “Right?”

“You know I can never predict you, Will.”

Will stares into the bathroom mirror in the morning, reaching up to pick out a piece of popcorn kernel stuck just underneath his back tooth, poking into his gums. He’d missed it while brushing his teeth last night. He flicked the bit into the trash can beside the sink before straightening up to look into the mirror again, running his fingers down his cheek scar, feeling over long-healed tissue. If he concentrated hard enough, dug his dull fingernail hard enough against the tender flesh, he could almost remember the feeling of the scar made fresh. Pure agony. Pure rage. Pure clarity in a way he’s never felt since. An epiphany under the moonlight.

His left hand reached for his razor, and he shaved delicately, only letting the razor hang over the scar for a brief moment, as though it were still sore.

If he concentrated hard enough, he could remember the blinding, spitting pain of jagged flesh exposed to the salty sea air, and the feeling of Hannibal’s warm eyes gazing into his.

Will picked up the cup of coffee already poured for him in the kitchen, and watched Hannibal read from his tablet at the table. Their dog was curled up at his feet, twitching in her sleep as Hannibal dipped his biscotti into his coffee and took a bite, absently scrolling through various articles. Around him were books from his office, open to various pages, and Hannibal set down the biscotti to pick up a pen and take notes.

Will took a piece of biscotti from the platter at the table, dipped it into his own coffee. “Next lecture?”

“Yes,” Hannibal said, making a note on a page. “On the eleventh, a Thursday. Around three in the afternoon, they are still finalizing the schedules. Will you attend?”

Will sipped his coffee, ran a hand through his hair. “Can’t, my cover has a standing appointment the next five Thursdays during that time.”

Hannibal nodded, underlining something firmly on the next page. “I understand. I’ll save my notes for you to look over, if you wish.”

“Thanks.”

“I am cleaning out our chest freezer this weekend, so I’ll need you to pick up shallots and lemons today.”

“I just bought a pack of shallots on sale, they’re in the pantry.”

“Why aren’t they with the other onions in the vegetable dish?”

“I forgot? Sorry, I left them on the shelf with the rice vinegar.”

Will didn’t exactly *hear* Hannibal sigh, but he sure felt it. He finished his coffee, set the cup in the sink. “I’ll head out later, need to change the oil in the car first.”

“I thought we were taking it to the shop.”

“It’s an oil change, why would we waste the time and money? I can do it, just give me an hour. Make me a list if you need anything else while I’m out.”

Hannibal tore off a piece of paper from his notebook, a few items quickly written down while Will went back upstairs to get a pair of old shoes to work on the car. It was a good choice of action, as he ended up spilling a bit of the oil during the change. The tepid, slippery oil felt almost warm to the touch, even through the rubber gloves he was wearing. Will rubbed his fingers together, letting the oil seep out and drip to the pavement.

The trunk got a clean-out as well, the tarps and ropes and various instruments all changed for newer and fresher materials for the next hunt.

Will has occasionally stolen a book from Hannibal to flip through, to annoy later when he feels like agitating the creature he lives with. The book is filled with sketches of him, of the dog, of the rose bushes, of the cathedral doors, of the local florist booth, the florist and her floppy straw hat.

Will hated her for being in these pages.

He left the notebook on Hannibal’s side of the bed and retrieved the grocery list from downstairs. Hannibal has abandoned his research to draw St. Catherine, broken on her wheel, his idea of idle doodles.

Will can picture her with a hat as he got back in their car.

“What drew his attention?” Hannibal asked as they continued their drive home from the cocktail party, hoping for a different answer than the one he suspected.

Will traced a water droplet on the car window, staring out into the darkness. “He was looking at me.”

Hannibal’s nails dug into the steering wheel.

The nightmares that used to plague Will constantly have almost all but faded now. But one cool autumn night, a dream shattered his sleep and he woke up with no memory of the details. His hand came up to cover his heart in an attempt to regulate his breathing, feeling the beat eventually beat slower, and slower, and slower. As he struggles to breathe normally again, he turns his head to the side, looking into the mirror inside their open closet door. He thought about the routine of the previous day, and the day before that, and the week before,

the month before, breakfast, work, eating a packed lunch, getting home, working on his lures, having dinner…

“Will.”

Hannibal’s voice was low and rough from sleep, his movements slower but still graceful as he rested a hand on Will’s hip. Will watched their reflection in the mirror, watched Hannibal’s other hand reach up to lightly stroke his cheek scar, his lips press against the back of his neck. Will watched, without participation, as Hannibal ran a hand over the deep scar just above his pajama waistline. That small touch has always felt more intimate than anything else they’ve done together.

“Will?”

Will turned over, and met Hannibal’s lips in a kiss, keeping them both distracted for the time being as he effectively straddled his husband, not breaking the kiss for a moment. He let himself be swept up in the moment, in Hannibal’s hands on his skin, his lips against his lips, his jaw, his cheek and scar, down his neck.

Will turned his head for a better angle, and watched the man who ripped his life to shreds lightly brush his lips over his jugular.

“What did you dream about?” Hannibal’s voice was low, yet still a touch too clinical for the intimate setting. Will shushed him with another kiss.

“I don’t want to dream.”

The rain came down even heavier by the time they arrived back at the house from the cocktail party. It wouldn’t be more than a few steps until they were inside, but neither Will nor Hannibal made the effort to unlock the car door. They sat in silence as it poured, streaming down the windshield. The radio was off, now. Both tried to look through the windshield to make out the house before them.

“Did you imagine it would ever feel like this?” Will asked, breaking the silence. His hand still chased raindrops down the passenger window.

Hannibal drags a nail over the gearshift. “Did I imagine what would feel like what, Will?”

Will doesn’t turn back to look at him, and Hannibal doesn’t, either, but could sense Will casually waving a hand between them. “This. Did you ever imagine it would feel like this?”

“What emotion would you title this, between us?”

Will’s answer took a minute. “Contentment,” was the word he settled on. “Do you feel content?”

“I do.”

Will's fingers followed a drop all the way down. "I lived in contentment before this, you know."

"As did I."

"What's the opposite of contentment?"

"Discontent."

"Cute."

"Anguish. Exasperation. Are those emotions you are currently feeling?"

"No. What about you?"

"I feel neither of those emotions, presently."

There are two slices of anniversary cake in the fridge, with orange blossom buttercream frosting and vanilla beans embedded within the cake itself.

Will didn't turn his head to Hannibal as he stated, "Can you make that popcorn again tonight?"

"I will."

Contentment.

Will pulled open the sunroof to their car, to stare up at the sky and the rain. It showed no sign of stopping. And, as he stared up he thought loudly, thought loud enough that he hoped Hannibal could hear him: I don't want you ***content****.*

I want your thoughts constantly wrapping themselves around each other, all around my own.

The seminary student, Tom, had arrived to continue his own little lecture about Song of Songs. Hannibal's own lecture sat before him as he worked at the kitchen table, a severe glance in his eyes if either him or Will were to look his way.

Will's smile was back on his face, with all of his teeth, all to lure in a poor helpless little fish.

"...I agree." Will's voice was far away in Hannibal's mind as he stared back at his images of dead saints. He thought briefly about the blonde seminary student in an artful pose of his own demise. "It's about a relationship between God and man, but on equal terms. Presenting faith as a two-way street, rather than blind acceptance."

"Be easier with blind acceptance, wouldn't it?" Tom laughed. Will also laughed, with all of his teeth. "But not what I'm interested in. Or you."

Will's Adam's apple bobbed once, and his incisors slipped into the smile. "Oh?"

"Of course it's not. I can see that."

Hannibal looked up when his lighting changed, changed by Will grabbing the floral arrangement still in its florist vase, breaking across the seminary studnet's cheek and knocking him to the ground.

Will hated that stupid vase. Hannibal had a hundred pretty vases, and he kept the cheap one she gave him the flowers in. He hated the stupid lecture he'd forced himself to listen to, and he hated the Hannibal's lecture that took up his time and attention.

And most of all, he hated the wide blue eyes staring up at him, frozen in terror, each blink that dropped yet more tears like rain streaming down windshields.

"Stop looking at me."

The seminary student *(Ted? Trevor? Tom, right, sure, whatever, whoever)* struggled to move away, letting out a yelp when Will abruptly yanked him back and wrapped a hand around his neck. He gazed up into Will's eyes, blinking out more raindrops.

Will's other hand joined the other on the seminary student's neck, both squeezing to make the obnoxious pleading noises stop. He still wouldn't close his goddamn eyes.

A harder, rougher squeeze. "Stop fucking looking at me."

The seminary student's eyes still wouldn't close, and Will felt himself start vibrating in pure rage, pure fury, at this one simple request that couldn't be granted. His nails bit into the skin of his neck, and he only pressed harder when he *still* stared at him.

And then, without a word or a gesture or anything of the sort, a hand with a dark red stone on the ring finger covered the eyes of the seminary student. With another squeeze, the noises were softer. A second hand covered the hand covering the eyes, ensuring no line of sight.

Will slowly lifted his eyes from the hands, to the face of the man he promised to love until the world stopped turning for them. A sense of relief, like cooling water, started down his spine, the rage inside quelling as he stared into those dark, dark eyes that held nothing but adoration. He could have wept.

The man below them both twitched, Will kept his hands on his neck, changing his tactic from choking to a long, slow strangulation.

"He was looking at me," Will told Hannibal, their eyes not leaving each other. "I don't want him to look at me."

"He won't."

"I don't want him to look at *you*, either."

“He won’t.”

“I don’t want him to *see*.”

Hannibal’s hands did not move from their position, covering the seminary student’s eyes. If anything, they only held tighter.

Neither spoke for a full two minutes as they stared at each other, the strangulation below happening at a snail’s pace.

“What do you see, Will?”

“Everything. All of my thoughts, my desires, refracted back at me from you. Broken and bounced off us like a prism. Same concepts, different executions.”

Hannibal’s gaze was a sunbeam. “I was going to kill him when he stepped through the door.”

“That’s why I brought him here.” Will’s gaze was the sun glistening off snow. “I want to kill your florist.”

“This floral arrangement was for you.”

“And you left it in a cheap vase.”

“I suppose this is also the reason I found one of my notebooks in our fireplace, in ashes.”

“Same reason you keep fucking our car up, so I have to fix it.”

“The same reason you won’t attend my lecture, even though you don’t have an appointment for the next seven Thursdays.”’

“So that’s where my appointment book went. I went through your rolodex, you’ve written down the name of every single one of my patients.”

The body twitches under them. He hasn’t got much time left to breathe.

“I know every day I’m not home by mid-afternoon, you steal my aftershave,” Will spat out, a grin spread across his lips, with the barest flash of sharp teeth. “You put a drop on your pocket square or handkerchief or hell, I don’t even know where else on you, but you steal a drop at a time and I can smell you when I get home, even if it’s only an hour. You think I don’t know you steal a drop at a time but I do.”

“And I also know that my cologne is always in the wrong place when I return home from a lecture or the shops,” Hannibal snarled back, teeth bared in an awful smile, “It’s in your scarves, wrapped around your neck and nose during your appointments when your mind wanders. You spray your right sleeve so when you hold your chin when you attempt to look interested, you smell me.”

“Your notebooks reek of my bad aftershave."

“So does your boat. I found a travel size atomizer there on our last excursion.”

Another desperate twitch from below.

“You want to know what I see, doctor? I see desperation. *Anguish*. You want me inside all of your senses at once. You want to hear me, smell me, taste me, touch me, even when you’re not looking at me.”

“And I see everything you’ve described to me, Will, reflect in your eyes.”

The body had almost stopped twitching, Will and Hannibal had only moved closer during the heated exchange. Abruptly, Will let go of the seminary student’s throat. He gasped for a huge breath of air, a delirious, rapturous laugh escaped from his lips as he took a few more shallow breaths.

Will didn’t break Hannibal’s gaze as he flipped out the knife from their fourth anniversary and brought it down hard into the jugular vein, spraying them both in the face with the spray.

The body twitched like mad under both of them, shaking and sputtering but it hardly made a sound at all as it thrashed against the hardwood floor amongst roses and cheap florist glass.

And Hannibal never once loosened his grip on the body, never once let the eyes see a thing, even in their last moments. He didn’t break Will’s gaze as he watched Will’s hands reach for his face, pulling him into a deep, deep, desperate kiss that tasted like copper and orange blossom.

They don’t break apart until the body stops twitching.

“Do you see me?” Will murmured against his lips, licking a drop of blood running down Hannibal’s cheek like a teardrop or a raindrop.

Hannibal kissed his lips again, still not moving his hands until he was told to. “I see you.”

Will’s hands covered Hannibal’s, squeezing them, not unlike the slow ministrations of a strangulation. “Does it make you *content?”* The word falls out like a loose tooth. There was a real fear just behind Will's tongue as he spoke the word. Hannibal soothed the bitterness with another sweet kiss.

“Will, if I had to look at nothing else forever except your eyes, I would be in bliss.”

After a few hours, the body was taken care of, the floor was mopped, the remains of the florist vase in the trash, and both Will and Hannibal changed into more comfortable clothes. Bone broth was boiling on the stove, as the two of them shared the last slice of cake and a bowl of popcorn.

“How have we lasted so long?” Will asked, an arm slung around Hannibal’s shoulders, accepting a piece of cake fed to him. “How haven’t we done what we did to him to each

other?”

Hannibal put the fork down to brush a smear of frosting from the corner of Will’s mouth, as he offered the only explanation he could think of: “Our love for each other isn’t blind faith, Will, or a simple emotion. It’s devotion. It’s a choice made each and every day, one I am grateful for.”

Will stroked the nape of Hannibal’s neck, and smiled at him, and only with his eyes. The rarest smile of all. “So am I.”

End Notes

Please leave comments and kudos! I'll try and get back to replying to comments soon!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!